

# Oregon House of Representatives Judiciary Committee

Testimony in favor of HB 2552 and HB 2549

Jan and Jim Spitz  
Bend, OR

February 25, 2013

Dear Representatives Barker, Garrett, Krieger, Barton, Cameron, Hicks, Olson, Tomei, Williamson:

We are grateful for the opportunity to weigh in on your consideration of these bills pertaining to former sex offenders in Oregon. We testified before you in 2011 in firm opposition to SB 67. The young son, a juvenile, of our good friends was at risk of being publicly humiliated by being posted on the Internet, possibly for life. We are all unbelievably grateful to the Committee for putting a hold on SB 67.

About eight months ago this young man was granted relief from registering as a sex offender after being required by law to register for two years. This was a pivotal event that marked an extreme sense of relief to him and his family but it happened after six years of extreme emotional stress, a grandfather's suicide, tens of thousands of dollars spent and of course, the persistent terror that his secret would be discovered. It is interesting that a very small fraction of juveniles are granted relief from registering. This young man has been repentant from the beginning, able to continue his education (he is now excelling in advanced physics in his third year at university) and also continued his part-time job for over three years. How much would have been possible if he faced a lifetime on the registry, or worse, public exposure on the Internet?

HB 2552 is a welcome sign that we care enough about children to still hold them accountable but abandon the threat of the sex offender registry. This will make it much more likely that they will be able to move on with their lives as better people.

We strongly support both of these bills with the belief that you are still committed to justice only with a lesser intent to devastate the remainder of both juvenile and adult low-risk, former offenders' lives.

Again, we thank you for the courage to examine our system's excessively harsh practices in this hyper emotional environment!